

Dean, Jr. et al.
Amendment and Response
Serial No. 09/460,552

REMARKS

Reexamination and reconsideration of claims 1-6 is requested. The recognition of allowable subject matter in claims 2-4 is appreciated. Claims 7-16 are being cancelled without prejudice. New claims 17-20 are presented for the Examiner's consideration.

The Examiner's acknowledgement of Applicant's information disclosure statement (PTO 1449) is noted with appreciation.

Drawings are being submitted as part of this facsimile transmission. A Letter to the Official Draftsman is being submitted under separate cover having formal drawings therewith. Entry of the formal drawings and withdrawal of all objections to the drawings is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 5-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) applying U.S. Pat. No. 5,926,596 ('596). The '596 patent requires a two part ferrule, an alignment block 12 and an overmolded body portion 14, without manufacturing tolerances disclosed. The alignment block 12 has an exposed front face 16, but essentially the rest of the block is encapsulated by the overmolding 14. The alignment block is "preferably made of a material that melts at a temperature above the application temperature of the encapsulating compound or ... is not influenced by the temperature ... [it is made of] for example, metal, ceramic, or thermoset composite material." Col. 7, ll. 25-37. However, the cross section of Fig. 5 is incorrect, apparently, because it shows a single material, not distinguishing between items 12 and 14. The '596 patent does not, *inter alia*, disclose each and every feature of the claimed

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Serial No. 09/460,552

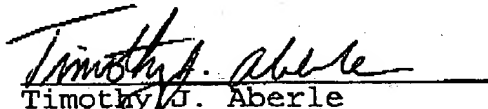
inventions. Withdrawal of the sec. 102(b) rejection is believed to be warranted and is respectfully requested.

New claims 17-20 are presented for the Examiner's consideration. Allowance of the same is respectfully requested.

Please charge \$336.00 for the addition of new claims to Deposit Account No. 19-2167. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136, such extension is requested and the fee should be charged to said Deposit Account.

The Examiner is welcomed to telephone the undersigned to discuss the merits of this patent application.

Respectfully submitted,


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Date: June 27, 2002

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Serial No. 09/460,552

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

1. (amended) A ferrule comprising:
at least one optical fiber bore associated with a front surface and a rear surface of said ferrule;
first and second body portions extending at least partially between said surfaces and having respective widths, a juncture of said body portions comprising an interface in the form of a parting line, said parting line and said optical fiber bore extending longitudinally ^{to} at least partially between ^{from} said front surface and said rear surface, and said parting line defining an offset of at least about 50 microns between said portions.

~~first and second ferrule body portions joined along a parting line, wherein at least one of said ferrule body portions defines at least one optical fiber bore extending lengthwise through the ferrule,~~

~~wherein said first ferrule body portion has a first width, and wherein said second ferrule body portion has a second width that is smaller than the first width by at least 50 microns.~~

5. A ferrule according to Claim 1, said parting line comprising a ledge wherein said first and second ferrule body portions cooperate to define a ledge extending lengthwise along the parting line.

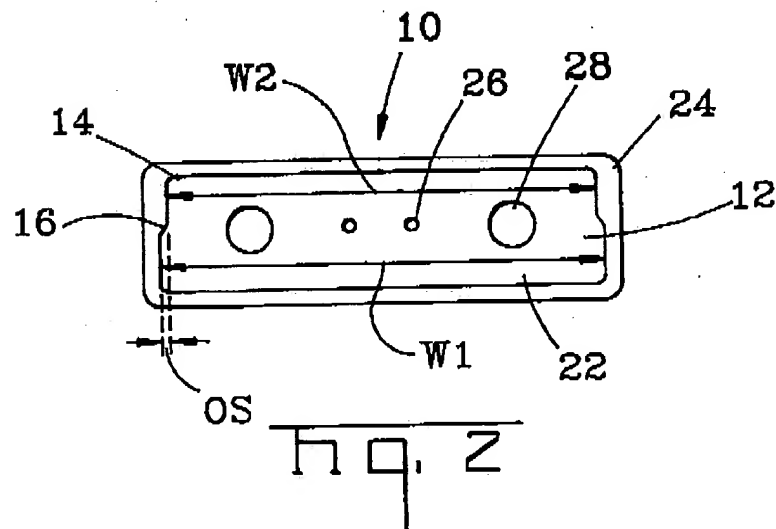
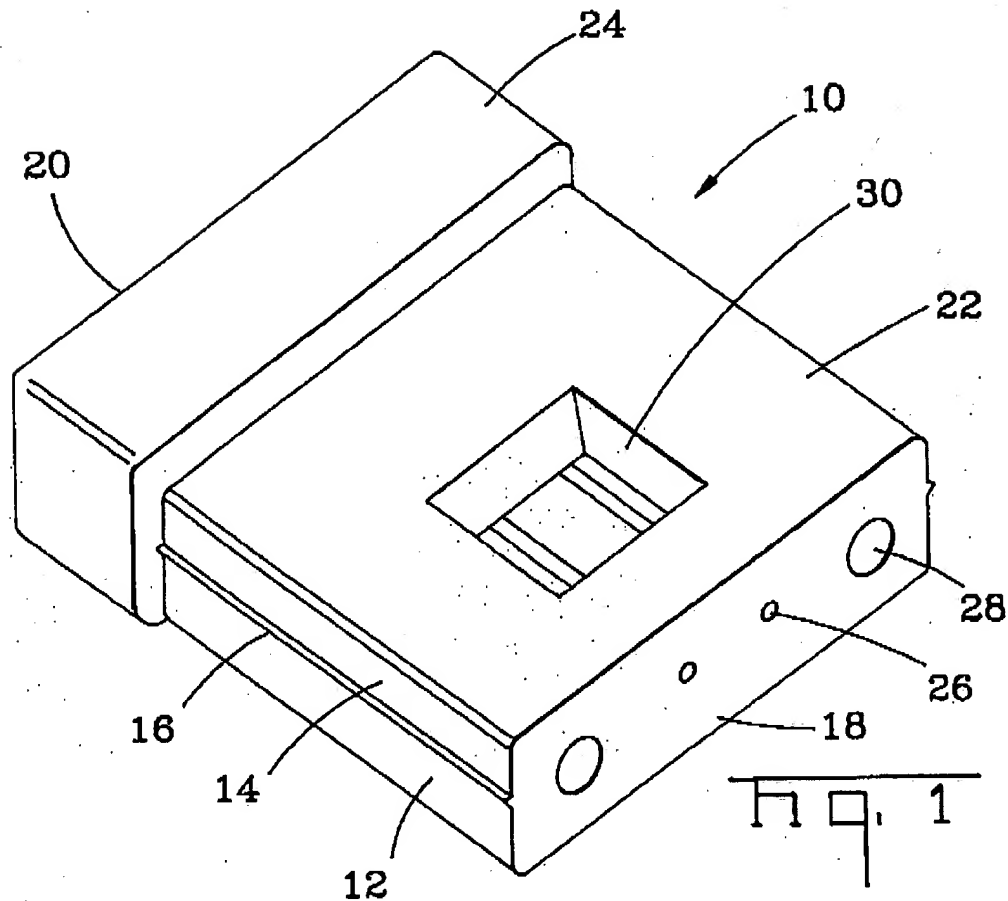
6. A ferrule according to Claim 1, said ferrule comprising multiple bores and defining a multifiber ferrule wherein said first and second ferrule body portions cooperate

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~~to define a plurality of optical fiber bores such that the
ferrule is a multifiber ferrule.~~

Cancel claims 7-16 without prejudice.

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HE0083 2/2

